

## Specification Status

Referring to Figures 3 and 7, the guide assembly 32 comprises a pair of laterally spaced, spring biased locating plate assemblies 80 70 pivotally attached at inner ends to the hitch 14. The locating plate assemblies 80 70 are generally wedge shaped having triangular top and bottom plates, forwardly and inwardly converging front plates 82 72 and transverse rear plates 84 74. The front plates 82 72 are normal to the vertical axis of the hitch opening 22 and defining a rearwardly opening triangular pocket of sufficient size for receiving and aligning the tow bar eyelet 13 with the locking pin 64 as the tug operator advances toward the tow bar. Preferably, the front plates 82 72 have an included angle of around 60° to 120°. Spring assemblies 86 76 bias the plate assemblies 80 70 to the illustrated normal position for receiving the tow bar eyelet. Each spring assembly 86 76 includes a compression spring 88 78 surrounding a threaded rod 90 80 having a hook end 92 82 captured by the shank of a fastener 50. The front end of the rod 90 80 and a shaft 82 that extends through an aperture in the rear plate 84 74 and has a nut and washer assembly 94 84 adjustably connected thereto for establishing the inclination of the front plates 82 72 and preloading of the spring 88 78. Access to the assemblies 94 84 is provided through apertures 86 in the top plate. As is apparent, in addition to guiding the tow bar into alignment for coupling, the plate assemblies 80 70 will absorb impacts during alignment. Further, each plate assembly 80 70 may pivot about the associated fastener 50 sufficiently to accommodate a tow bar orientation transverse to the tug 16, thereby allowing tight radius turns in the towing of the aircraft.